



Welcome to Finchley Catholic High School

Finchley Catholic High School is part of the Diocese of Westminster and is situated in the London Borough of Barnet, close to Woodside Park station on the Northern Line. It is a six-form entry 11 - 18 boys Voluntary Aided comprehensive with 1200 pupils, including 320 in the 6th Form. Since September 2007, we have been coeducational at Post-16 and currently have 80 girls on roll. Heavily oversubscribed in all year groups, we serve the Catholic community over a large area of North London and South Hertfordshire. Our reputation for excellence has made competition for places more intense and last year over thirty appeals were heard.

Our school has a diverse socio-economic and ethnic mix which combines pupils from the affluent parts of Tottenham with some from deprived inner-city estates. 51% of our students are from ethnic minorities. There are 148 on the SEN register, including 35 with statements, and 90 pupils are entitled to free school meals. We have 72 FTE teaching staff and 38 support staff.

We enjoy very strong support from our parents. There is a thriving PTA and a real sense of community, which visitors to the school frequently remark upon.

The school site is disparate in nature, with a blend of the old and the new; comprising seven separate buildings. The oldest dates back to 1860 and the most recent was completed just last year. Extensions have been built to our Business Studies Centre, Dining Hall and Science Area during the past seven years. We have our own sports field, a short walk from the school, which has been substantially upgraded and boasts a completely refurbished sports pavilion. The school also benefits from an all-weather multi-sports surface on site. In September 2014, we opened a brand new Sixth Form Centre the construction of which has been funded entirely by the school community.

Academic study is managed by individual Curriculum Leaders who, in the main, have their subject teachers grouped in rooms adjacent to them. Each Curriculum Leader is line managed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Each year group is led by a Pastoral Leader who has a team of six form tutors, plus attached staff. The Pastoral Leaders of Years 7 and the Sixth Form are static, whilst the others rotate. Frequently, the form tutor will stay with his or her group throughout the five years. A member of the Leadership Team helps to coordinate each of the Year Groups.

The teaching staff contains a blend of those new to the profession and those with wide experience and lengthy service. Over recent years the school has been heavily involved in the Schools Direct programme and upwards of twenty members of the current staff have come to the school via this and similar routes. It is a characteristic of our teachers that they are prepared to go the extra mile and the Support Staff are equally hard working and committed. In general, staff turnover is relatively low. There are excellent induction and professional development programmes in place to support all colleagues.

We pride ourselves in recognising and catering for the individual needs of our pupils across the ability spectrum. However, we have a universal expectation in terms of each pupil doing his or her best. Academic success is complemented by an extensive extra-curricular programme and high quality pastoral care. The school is certainly one where standards and expectations are high and we are determined that we will continue to improve from year to year. Our results in all key stages are significantly above the national averages and have been on a rising trend over many years. In 2013, the school was recognised by the DfE as one of the top 100 comprehensive schools in England for attainment (5 x A* - C grades including English and Maths) at GCSE and we would expect to achieve similar recognition in 2015.

Pupils in Key Stage 3 follow a broad and balanced 2 year curriculum. At Key Stage 4, we have moved to a three year curriculum which allows students to study for between 8 and 12 GCSEs, or equivalent. Most pupils stay on to our Sixth Form and last year more than 130 went on to study for degree courses. Since September 2000 we have been working in collaboration with St. Michael's Catholic Grammar at Post-16 enabling us to offer a very broad range of thirty-two AS Levels, more than any other Sixth Form in Barnet. Currently almost fifty female students study one or more subjects on our site with a similar number of FCHS students going down to St Michael's.

Finchley Catholic High School has a happy working environment where good relationships between staff and staff, staff and pupils and pupils and pupils are based on an atmosphere of openness and trust. We have a strong commitment to the development of the whole person and there is a well-established culture of extra-curricular activities. Parent and pupil surveys, commissioned through an external marketing company, reveal a high level of satisfaction across the full range of our activities.

The Senior Leadership Team consists of the Headteacher, two Deputies, the School Business Manager and five Assistant Headteachers. The team is well established, experienced and very open.

We enjoyed a successful Ofsted inspection in November, 2013 in which the school was judged to be 'Good with Outstanding features'. Copies of the Section 5 and Section 48 reports are available on our website.

Seamus McKenna,
Headteacher

November, 2015